

## Aligning Prosthetic and Bra Fitting Services

### Situation

#### Prosthetic Bra Fitter

The Breast Service is looking to align the Breast Prosthetic Service on both sites. The Services is dedicated to Breast cancer patients have gone through cancer treatment and had a mastectomy. Currently the services are run very differently, with Bournemouth site having a dedicated fitter who supports the role 15 hours a week. At Poole there is no dedicated person to provide this service. The Clinical Lead, Operational Lead and General Manager have reviewed the service and wish to align the Poole Services to the Bournemouth Services.

### Background

Currently the prosthesis clinic at Poole is run fortnightly on Tuesdays alongside Breast Clinics with an average of 12 patients needing support on the day. This can also vary as patients can walk in for support/fitting on the day. On average 5 patients a week walk in and roughly 2 patients a month come in via GP referral route.

There is no dedicated person to run and support this service. A cancer support worker who has been supporting the prosthetic/bra fitting service has left the post and the service is now at risk of closure. At Bournemouth there is dedicated fitter who takes full responsibility for the fitting and management of bras and her role is funded by the Trust.

At Poole, the fitter is supported by external fitters who alternate from 2 companies; Silima and Anita. For patient experience and ability to develop the service and meet the needs of patients, it will be ideal to have a dedicated fitter as the external fitters are not always guaranteed and offer variables in the service and products on offer to patients.

A dedicated person to the service is needed as patients need emotional support which requires a dedicated person to provide this vital support.

### Assessment

#### Impact on Breast Services and Cancer Services

The role also undertakes the ordering of stock and all administrative tasks to support the prosthesis service which is very time consuming. The time needed for prosthesis administration has not been possible since the cancer support worker post has been vacant; this has prevented the service from fulfilling their role of providing holistic emotional and psychological support for patients.

The unit has a prosthesis phone line that patients call when there product has split and they need a new one, or they have changed shape or size and are not getting on with their product. We also have patients arriving in the unit without an appointment asking for another product who may need booking into a clinic which the services have not been able to support. The unit receives GP referrals for patients that may have moved to the area or need symmetrising for other reasons.

The role also taken on the ordering of stock, administration such as filling in the outcome slips from clinic for each patient and putting a note on EPR as to what product was fitted and when for warranty and audit purposes.

### **Impact on Patient Care**

The prosthesis service is an invaluable service for breast cancer patients who have gone through cancer treatment and had a mastectomy. The psychological impact this has on our patients is enormous, and when patients come for their fitting and they can see symmetry again in clothing after being fitted with a good supportive mastectomy bra and prosthesis they leave with a smile on their face.

### **Recommendations**

The prosthesis service needs a dedicated member of staff to do 15 hours a week to continue the current prosthesis clinic and its administration as well as evolve and develop the service for cancer patients. They will also have time to look at new products and stock and also raise further charity money for the fund to help with some of these purchases. A cancer support worker has been supporting the prosthetic/bra fitting service and taking on the prosthesis clinic duties and this has not been possible for the team to continue to support since the post became vacant. The prosthesis service is an invaluable service for breast cancer patients who have gone through cancer treatment and had a mastectomy.

### **Full or Part Time post?**

Part-time post 15 hours a week at Band 4 is required and this will align the Poole Service to Royal Bournemouth Service and will overturn the risk of services closure.

### **Finance**

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The Service at Royal Bournemouth is a Band 4 (0.40 WTE) substantive and is currently funded via the Breast services budget.

Funding for this post can be made available via the transfer of unused B3 budget. Cost centre 10386, Account code 36057 has 0.41 WTE of Band 3 substantive budget available that can be transferred into cost centre 10835 to meet this budgetary requirement. The annual cost of 0.40 WTE Band 4 at mid-point of the scale including on costs would be £12,460.40.